

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 023174

NODIS
FOR AMBASSADORS ONLY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GR

SUBJECT: LETTER FROM PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS TO PRESI-
DENT-ELECT CARTER

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF LETTER DATED JANUARY 17 FROM PRIME
MINISTER CARAMANLIS TO PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER. ADVANCE
COPY OF LETTER WAS DELIVERED TO ROBERT J. LIPSHUTZ (COUN-
SELOR TO THE PRESIDENT) BY GREEK EMBASSY PRIOR TO INAUGURA-
TION. SIGNED ORIGINAL DELIVERED TO WHITE HOUSE JANUARY 24.

BEGIN TEXT: DEAR MR. PRESIDENT, YOUR ELECTION TO THE
HIGH OFFICE OF PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES HAS RAISED
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HOPES AND EXPECTATIONS OF A NEW ERA IN YOUR COUNTRY AND IN
THE WORLD AT LARGE. AN ERA IN WHICH, AS YOU HAVE SO
ELOQUENTLY STATED, THE MORAL VALUES THAT LIE AT THE VERY
FOUNDATION OF OUR COMMON CIVILIZATION, WILL BE GIVEN
THEIR RIGHTFUL PLACE IN DEALING WITH PROBLEMS OF INTER-
NATIONAL LIFE.

I BELIEVE THAT AT THIS MOMENT WHEN YOU ARE CONSIDERING
THE POLICIES WHICH WILL TRANSLATE THESE EXPECTATIONS INTO
PRACTICE, IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL IF I WERE TO GIVE YOU MY

VIEWS ON GRECO-TURKISH DIFFERENCES. IN THIS I AM ENCOURAGED BY THE INTEREST YOU HAVE SHOWN ON THE SUBJECT BOTH DURING YOUR CAMPAIGN AND AFTER YOUR ELECTION. I AM TAKING THIS LIBERTY IN THE BELIEF THAT AN OBJECTIVE ANALYSIS OF THESE DIFFERENCES CAN CONSIDERABLY FACILITATE THEIR SETTLEMENT AND ALSO BECAUSE I THINK THAT A CONSTRUCTIVE APPROACH OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THESE ISSUES WILL HELP THEM TO RECOVER FULLY THEIR INFLUENCE IN THIS AREA, TO THE BENEFIT NOT ONLY OF THEMSELVES, BUT ALSO OF GREECE, TURKEY AND THE WESTERN WORLD AS A WHOLE.

IN THE FIRST PLACE, I WOULD LIKE TO ASSURE YOU, DEAR MR. PRESIDENT, THAT GREECE SEEKS NEITHER TO ISOLATE NOR TO WEAKEN TURKEY. ON THE CONTRARY, APPRECIATING AT ITS JUST VALUE HER IMPORTANCE TO THE DEFENCE OF THE WEST, SHE WISHES TO SEE TURKEY BECOMING A FACTOR OF STABILITY AND PEACE IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN. BUT IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT GREECE CAN NOT FORSAKE HER VITAL INTERESTS IN ORDER TO SATISFY UNREASONABLE TURKISH DEMANDS. NEITHER IS IT IN THE INTEREST OF THE WEST TO SEEK SUCH SACRIFICES, WHICH, IN THE LAST ANALYSIS, WILL PROVE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE. NOR IS THERE ANY SUCH NEED. BECAUSE I AM FIRMLY CONVINCED, THAT THE GRECO-TURKISH PROBLEMS CAN BE EASILY SOLVED, IF REASON AND GOOD FAITH WERE TO PREVAIL.

OUR DIFFERENCES WITH TURKEY COME UNDER TWO HEADINGS:
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THOSE THAT MAINLY AFFECT A THIRD GOVERNMENT BUT NEVERTHELESS INVOLVE GREECE FOR HISTORICAL AND SENTIMENTAL REASONS, AND THE STRICTLY BILATERAL ISSUES.

THE QUESTION OF CYPRUS COMES UNDER THE FIRST HEADING, THE PROBLEMS OF THE AEGEAN, UNDER THE SECOND.

I. - THE RECENT HISTORY OF CYPRUS IS KNOWN TO YOU. ON JULY 20, 1974, TURKEY INVADDED CYPRUS TAKING ADVANTAGE OF

THE COLONELS' COUP AGAINST ARCHBISHOP MAKARIOS AND CLAIMING THAT THE PURPOSE OF HER INTERVENTION WAS TO RESTORE LEGALITY. HOWEVER, LEGALITY WAS RESTORED THREE DAYS LATER IN THE PERSON OF MR. CLERIDES, IN CYPRUS AND, IN GREECE, THROUGH MY RETURN. THUS, TURKEY ATTAINED THE AVOWED ENDS OF HER INTERVENTION AND OUGHT TO HAVE WITHDRAWN HER TROOPS FROM CYPRUS. INSTEAD, THREE WEEKS LATER, WHILE NEGOTIATIONS FOR A SOLUTION WERE UNDER WAY AT GENEVA, THE TURKISH TROOPS LAUNCHED A SECOND ATTACK, OCCUPIED 40 PER CENT OF THE ISLAND'S TERRITORY, AND CREATED AT THE SAME TIME AN IMMENSE PROBLEM OF 200,000 REFUGEES.

GRANTING THAT THERE WAS SOME GROUND FOR THE FIRST INVASION, THERE WAS NO JUSTIFICATION WHATEVER FOR THE SECOND AND

NONE WAS OFFERED BY TURKEY. THE GREEK SIDE WOULD HAVE BEEN PERFECTLY ENTITLED TO REQUEST THE RESTORATION OF THE ZURICH REGIME, WHICH BOTH GREECE AND TURKEY HAD GUARANTEED. HOWEVER, IN A SHOW OF GOODWILL THE GREEK SIDE ACCEPTS THE SETTLEMENT OF THE PROBLEM ON A NEW BASIS, BY ADOPTING POSITIONS WHICH CAN SATISFY NEARLY ALL REASONABLE DEMANDS THAT THE TURKISH SIDE MIGHT MAKE.

NEVERTHELESS, TURKEY, ALTHOUGH AWARE OF THESE POSITIONS OF ARCHBISHOP MAKARIOS, REFUSES ON VARIOUS PRETEXTS ANY SUBSTANTIVE NEGOTIATION. SHE IGNORES A WHOLE SERIES OF
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UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTIONS IN SPITE OF THE FACT THAT SHE HAS VOTED FOR THEM HERSELF. SIX ROUNDS OF INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS ENDED IN FAILURE, BECAUSE TURKEY REFUSES TO STATE WHAT EXACTLY SHE WANTS IN CYPRUS. SHE SIMPLY SITS TO THIS DATE ON 40 PERCENT OF THE ISLAND'S TERRITORY AND 65 PERCENT OF ITS NATURAL RESOURCES, WHILE DISPOSING ONLY OF 18 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION, AND PUTS THE INTERVENING TIME TO USE IN ORDER TO COLONIZE THE OCCUPIED AREA AND TO GENERALLY CONSOLIDATE HER RULE.

II. - THE DISPUTE OVER THE AEGEAN ADVERTS TO THE CONTINENTAL SHELF AND TO THE AIRSPACE. BOTH THESE ISSUES WERE RAISED BY TURKEY THROUGH ARBITRARY ACTS. GREECE, WHO FAVOURS THE STATUS QUO AS SHAPED BY VALID INTERNATIONAL TREATIES, COULD HAVE DENIED THE EXISTENCE OF ANY PROBLEM IN THE AEGEAN. INSTEAD, SHE NOT ONLY ACCEPTED TO DISCUSS THE ISSUES BUT ALSO ACTIVELY SOUGHT PEACEFUL AND REASONABLE SOLUTIONS, THROUGH INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED LEGAL PROCEDURES.

IN PARTICULAR, WITH REGARD TO THE SHELF, THE GREEK GOVERNMENT PROPOSED ON JANUARY 27, 1975, THAT THE TWO GOVERNMENTS SHOULD JOINTLY REFER TO THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF

JUSTICE THE QUESTION OF THE DELIMITATION OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF OF THE AEGEAN. THE GREEK PROPOSAL WAS ACCEPTED IN PRINCIPLE BY TURKEY ON 7TH FEBRUARY 1975. THIS AGREEMENT WAS RECONFIRMED WHEN I MET THE TURKISH PRIME MINISTER IN BRUSSELS, ON 31ST MAY 1975, AS SHOWN BY THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE MEETING, TURKEY ALSO ACCEPTED AT THAT MEETING THAT, SUBSEQUENT TO THE REFERRAL OF THE DISPUTE TO THE COURT, PARALLEL NEGOTIATIONS BE HELD TO SEEK AN AGREED SOLUTION, WHICH, IF FOUND, WOULD THEN BE SUBMITTED TO THE COURT TO BE INVESTED BY ITS HIGH INTERNATIONAL AUTHORITY. THE ADVANTAGES OFFERED BY THIS PROCEDURE FROM AN INTERNAL POLITICAL POINT OF VIEW WERE
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OBVIOUS. FURTHERMORE, IT ENSURED BEFOREHAND THAT THE DISPUTE WOULD BE SOLVED PEACEFULLY, IN THE EVENT NEGOTIATIONS FAILED. BUT THIS AGREEMENT WAS NOT HONOURED BY THE TURKS, WHO AT SEVERAL MEETINGS OF EXPERTS REFUSED TO DISCUSS THE DRAFTING OF THE SPECIAL AGREEMENT REQUIRED FOR JOINTLY SEIZING THE INTERNATIONAL COURT.

NOT CONTENT WITH GOING BACK ON THIS AGREED PROCEDURE, TURKEY CAUSED AN ACUTE CRISIS IN THE AEGEAN, IN THE SUMMER OF 1976, BY SENDING A SEISMOGRAPHIC SHIP TO EXPLORE PARTS OF ITS CONTINENTAL SHELF THAT GREECE CONSIDERS AS APPERTAINING TO HER. THIS WAS AN ARBITRARY PROVOCATION, SINCE TURKEY OUGHT TO HAVE RESPECTED THESE PARTS OF THE SHELF IF FOR NO OTHER REASON BUT BECAUSE SHE CONSIDERED THEM HERSELF TO BE DISPUTED. IN THIS CASE ALSO, GREECE PUT HER FAITH IN PEACEFUL PROCEDURES. SHE APPLIED TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL AND TO THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE. FURTHERMORE, IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE SECURITY COUNCIL ISSUED ITS RESOLUTION, GREECE STATED THAT SHE WAS READY TO COMPLY WITH ITS RECOMMENDATIONS.

III. - AS REGARDS THE AIRSPACE, IT IS A MATTER OF RECORD THAT BY VIRTUE OF INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS AND REGULATIONS, TO WHICH TURKEY IS ALSO A PARTY, GREECE WAS ENTRUSTED WITH THE EXCLUSIVE RESPONSIBILITY OF FLIGHT CONTROL IN AN AREA OVER THE AEGEAN EXTENDING TO THE MARITIME BOUNDARIES OF HER EASTERNMOST ISLANDS.

SINCE AUGUST 1974, TURKEY HAS TRIED TO UNILATERALLY ALTER THIS SITUATION. TO THIS EFFECT, SHE BISECTED THE AEGEAN AIRSPACE BY A LINE WHICH COINCIDES ROUGHLY WITH THE LIMITS OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF SHE IS CLAIMING AND, ON AUGUST 6, 1974, SHE ISSUED NOTAM 714 REQUIRING ARBITRARILY ALL PLANES CROSSING THIS LINE TO NOTIFY THEIR POSITION TO TURKISH AIR CONTROL STATIONS. IN PRACTICE, SHE ALSO ATTEMPTED TO ASSUME CONTROL OF THESE FLIGHTS INVOKING THE CONFIDENTIAL

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NECESSITY OF CREATING A "TURKISH" AIR SECURITY ZONE IN THE AEGEAN. AS WAS ONLY NATURAL, GREECE REACTED BY DECLARING THE AIRLANES AS UNSAFE AND THUS AIR TRAFFIC OVER THE AEGEAN WAS SUSPENDED.

IN OCTOBER 1974, THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION OFFERED TO MEDIATE AND FORMULATED UNOFFICIAL PROPOSALS, WHICH WOULD HAVE RESULTED IN REMOVAL OF THE MEASURES TAKEN BY EACH SIDE AND RESTORATION OF THE FORMER LEGALITY. GREECE ACCEPTED THEM. TURKEY DID NOT.

IN SPITE OF THIS ATTITUDE, THE GREEK GOVERNMENT AGAIN ACCEPTED BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS WHICH LED TO AGREEMENT ON

ALL ISSUES BUT ONE, NAMELY THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON MILITARY FLIGHTS OVER THE AEGEAN. GREECE SUBMITTED NEW PROPOSALS ON THIS POINT, WHICH WERE ACCEPTED BY THE TURKISH EXPERTS BUT WERE REJECTED BY THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT. THUS, THIS QUESTION ALSO REMAINS OPEN BECAUSE OF TURKEY.

IN A FURTHER EFFORT TO FACILITATE THE NORMALIZATION OF GRECO-TURKISH RELATIONS, THE GREEK GOVERNMENT TOOK A BROADER INITIATIVE.

ON 17TH APRIL 1976, I PROPOSED TO TURKEY THE CONCLUSION OF AN AGREEMENT BANNING THE USE OF FORCE AND PROVIDING FOR AN EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON RESPECTIVE ARMS PURCHASES. THE OBJECTIVE OF THIS PROPOSAL WAS TO BRING ABOUT A CLIMATE IN THE RELATIONS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES WHICH WOULD HAVE PERMITTED THE DISCUSSION OF OUR DIFFERENCE IN AN ATMOSPHERE FREE OF THREATS AND PRESSURES. TURKEY AGAIN ACCEPTED BY PROPOSAL IN THEORY AND REJECTED IT IN PRACTICE. REVERSING THE LOGICAL ORDER, SHE MAINTAINS THAT THE AGREEMENT BANNING THE USE OF FORCE OUGHT TO BE CONCLUDED AFTER THE SETTLEMENT OF OUR DIFFERENCES. BUT, OF CONFIDENTIAL

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COURSE, THE CONCLUSION OF SUCH AN AGREEMENT WOULD, THEN, BE MEANINGLESS.

IV. - FURTHER TO THESE PROBLEMS THERE IS ALSO THE QUESTION OF THE DEFENSIVE MEASURES TAKEN ON SOME ISLANDS IN THE AEGEAN. ON THIS, I WOULD LIKE TO STRESS THAT GREECE HAS NEVER BY ANY TREATY SURRENDERED HER NATURAL RIGHT OF SELF-DEFENCE IN THE EVENT HER ISLANDS WERE THREATENED. IN THE PAST SHE PROVIDED FOR THEIR DEFENCE ONLY IN TIMES OF ACUTE GRECO-TURKISH CRISES. NOW, AS THEN, ELEMENTARY SECURITY MEASURES WERE TAKEN ONLY AFTER THE TWO OPERATIONS AGAINST CYPRUS; AFTER THREATS WERE VOICED AGAINST THEM BY TURKISH OFFICIALS INCLUDING MR. DEMIREL; AFTER THE FORM-

ATION BY TURKEY OF A SPECIAL ARMY OF THE AEGEAN AND AFTER THE CONCENTRATION OPPOSITE TO THE ISLAND OF THE STRONGEST LANDING FORCES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN. NEVERTHELESS, I STATED IN WRITING TO THE TURKISH PRIME MINISTER THAT THE MEASURES TAKEN ON THE ISLANDS WERE PURELY DEFENSIVE AND THAT THEY SERVED NO OFFENSIVE PURPOSES, WHICH WOULD IN ANY EVENT BE UNTHINKABLE IN PRACTICE.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT, THE PROBLEM OF THE AEGEAN IS NOT ONE OF EXPLOITING ITS NATURAL RESOURCES, IF ANY. ONE HAS THE IMPRESSION THAT TURKEY AIMS AT UNILATERALLY CHANGING THE STATUS QUO IN THE AEGEAN WHICH WAS SANCTIONED BY INTERNATIONAL TREATIES AND HAS FUNCTIONED NORMALLY TO THIS DATE. SHE IS TRYING TO CHANGE IT BECAUSE, IF HER CLAIMS

ON THE CONTINENTAL SHELF AND THE AIRSPACE WERE TO BE SATISFIED, THEY WOULD RESULT IN ENCLAVING 501 GREEK ISLANDS AND ISLETS WITH A POPULATION OF 330,000 IN A ZONE OF EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC AND STRATEGIC INTERESTS OF TURKEY. THE TERRITORIAL AND POLITICAL UNITY OF THE GREEK STATE WOULD THUS BE DISLOCATED.
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I THINK THAT I HAVE SHOWN THAT GREECE HAS PROVEN WITH DEEDS HER WILLINGNESS TO SEEK PEACEFUL AND REASONABLE ARRANGEMENTS TO ALL HER DIFFERENCES WITH TURKEY. BUT GREECE WILL NEVER ACCEPT HER SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE ISLANDS TO BE JEOPARDIZED. NEITHER WILL SHE ACCEPT SOLUTIONS DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY UNDERMINING HER TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND STATE UNITY. GREECE THREATENS NO ONE AND HAS NO AGGRESSIVE INTENTIONS AGAINST ANYONE. BUT IF SHE EVER HAS TO DEFEND HER TERRITORY, SHE WOULD, WITHOUT HESITATION, FOLLOW THE IMPERATIVES OF HER HISTORY AND HONOUR. ON THIS POINT, THERE OUGHT TO BE NO DOUBT WHATEVER.

EVEN AS I AM WRITING TO YOU, GREECE IS SEEKING PEACEFUL SOLUTIONS THROUGH TALKS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RESOLUTION OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL. I AM CONVINCED THAT THESE SOLUTIONS ARE NOT DIFFICULT TO FIND. BUT, IN ORDER TO REACH THIS HAPPY END, TURKEY MUST SHOW THE SAME GOOD FAITH AND THE SAME PEACEFUL INTENT. AND SHE OUGHT NOT TO BE LEFT IN THE SLIGHTEST DOUBT THAT UNDER NO ACCOUNT OR PRETEXT WHATSOEVER WILL SHE BE ALLOWED TO JEOPARDIZE THE PEACE AND SERENITY OF THE WORLD. ON THIS PARTICULAR POINT, YOUR GREAT COUNTRY CAN PLAY A DECISIVE ROLE.

THE ASSURANCE GIVEN TO US THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD OPPOSE A MILITARY SOLUTION TO THESE DISPUTES AND WOULD MAKE A MAJOR EFFORT TO PREVENT SUCH A COURSE OF ACTION WILL HAVE TO BE STRENGTHENED AND PUT IN A MORE CONCRETE FORM.

FURTHERMORE, IT IS NECESSARY TO FIND A WAY OF SAFEGUARDING PEACE IN THE EVENT PRESENT NEGOTIATIONS ON THE CONTINENTAL SHELF WERE TO FAIL. IN OTHER WORDS, TO ENSURE THAT BRUTE FORCE SHALL BE BARRED AND THAT THE PEACEFUL OPTION OF JOINTLY SUBMITTING THE DISPUTE TO THE INTERNATIONAL COURT FOR AN IMPARTIAL DECISION BASED ONLY ON INTERNATIONAL
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LEGALITY AND LAW, SHALL REMAIN OPEN.

I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY, DEAR MR. PRESIDENT, TO ASSURE YOU OF THE DESIRE OF THE GREEK GOVERNMENT AND OF THE GREEK PEOPLE TO CONTINUE AND FURTHER STRENGTHEN THE TRADITIONAL FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION OF OUR TWO COUN-

TRIES. I NOTICE WITH PLEASURE THAT IN YOUR LETTER OF 9TH
NOVEMBER, 1976, YOU EXPRESS THE SAME INTENTION. THIS
STRENGTHENS MY OPTIMISM WITH REGARD TO GREEK-AMERICAN
COOPERATION AND TO THE MAINTENANCE OF PEACE AND SECURITY
IN THIS AREA OF THE WORLD.

PLEASE ACCEPT, DEAR MR. PRESIDENT, THE ASSURANCE OF MY
HIGHEST CONSIDERATION AND PERSONAL ESTEEM. CONSTANTINE
KARAMANLIS. END TEXT.

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